

## APPENDIX No. 4

The CHAIRMAN.—The objection was natural enough under the circumstances. Has the sub-committee something to report?

Mr. VERVILLE.—Not yet. We have been too busy this week.

## SCOPE OF LAW LIMITED TO PUBLIC WORKS AND PUBLIC PRINTING.

Prof. SKELTON.—There are two or three points I thought I would take up this morning. In the first place, it was asked that a brief summary be made of the most important of the American experiments, so I have prepared a memorandum, of which I have a few copies, covering the laws enacted by the States of Massachusetts, New York and Wisconsin, and by the Federal Government of the United States. I may say on this point that the further I have investigated the laws of the several states, the clearer it becomes that whatever the wording of the law may be, however wide it may be nominally, in practice the scope is limited almost entirely to public works.

## IN NEW YORK STATE.

In the case of New York State, where the terms of the law are wide enough, one would think, to cover every contract made by the government, as a matter of fact the only two lines covered are public works, including buildings of all sorts, the construction of canals, aqueducts, and so on, and the letting out of public printing. The question was brought up the last day, how is the wage provision in the New York law construed when the work is done on a piece basis. I am informed by the official who has charge of enforcing the law in New York State, that that question has never come up; they have never had to apply the law on a piece work basis, so that they never had to solve that question. I thought I might next, leaving this memorandum in the hands of the committee, go on briefly to make some suggestions as to the scope of the Bill before us. I do not pretend to bring any legal knowledge to bear on the point. But I wish to give some suggestions in the light of the American experiences I have gone over, as to the scope it might possibly have, simply as a starting point for discussion by the committee. The scope of the Bill before the committee may be considered from three view points. In the first place, to what different lines of work would it apply? Next, what employers in these lines of work would be affected? That is, how far would the ramifications of sub-contracting go? Would the purchasers of material, for example, be involved? And in the third place, what workmen in the employ of contractors affected by the law would be involved?

## SCOPE OF OPERATIONS UNDER BILL No. 21.

Taking up the first point, as to the lines of work that would be affected, I think it is clear the Bill before us would cover contracts for the construction and repair of public works, including such buildings as post offices, customs houses, armouries, Intercolonial stations, freight sheds, and so on, wharfs, piers, breakwaters, and railroads and canals. That is the most obvious group to which the Bill would apply.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Do you mean the construction of railways?—A. Construction or repair of railways.

*By Mr. Verville:*

Q. Government roads?—A. Yes, of the Government roads.

*By Mr. Stanfield:*

Q. Would that include cars, locomotives, &c.?—A. Yes, if those were specially contracted for by the Intercolonial management. In the second place, contracts with